

Michael J. SHEA
Serial No. 10/728,880
Response to Office Action dated July 13, 2006

Amendments to the Drawings:

The Figures have been amended to include certain reference numbers mentioned in the specification. Figure 10 has been amended to include reference numbers 102 and 503; Figure 15B to include reference numbers 316, 317, 351 and 355; and Figure 15C to include reference numbers 317 and 355. No new matter is added.

Appendix: Annotated Drawing Sheets Showing Changes
 Replacement Drawing Sheets

Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application are respectfully requested.

A Listing of Claims is provided for the Examiner's convenient reference.

The drawings were objected to because item 106 shown in Figures 8A, 9 and 10 is not mentioned in the specification when describing these figures. Applicant does not agree that this objection to the drawings is proper, but has nonetheless amended the specification so that the descriptions of Figures 8A, 9 and 10 mention network "106".

The drawings were also objected to because they do not include the following reference signs mentioned in the description: items 102 and 503 of Figure 10; items 301 and 303 of Figure 13B; and item 353 of Figure 15B. Figure 10 has been amended to add reference numbers 102 and 503. Items 301 and 303 are already present in Figure 13B and item 353 is already present in Figure 15B and thus the objection to the drawings as not containing these reference signs is improper. Applicant has however amended the description corresponding to Figure 13B to reference item 301 (item 303 is already referenced) and the description corresponding to Figure 15B to mention item 353.

The drawings were also objected to because they do not include the following reference signs mentioned in the description: items 317 and 355 of Figure 15C and items 316, 317 and 355 in Figure 15B. Figure 15C has been amended to include reference numerals 317 and 355 and Figure 15B has been amended to include reference numerals 316, 317 and 355 (as well as 351).

Claims 25, 29 and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically, Applicant's specification allegedly fails to disclose the "storage medium" recited in these claims. Applicant strongly traverses this contention. By way of example without limitation, the subject application describes an illustrative embodiment in which a system control program is stored in memory 507 of computer 102. See paragraph [0049]. Memory 507 is described as being "any standard memory device or combination of memory devices such as a semiconductor memory, a magnetic disk, a magnetic tape, or an optical memory such as a CD-ROM." See paragraph [0049]. Thus,

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the subject application fully and completely describes various non-limiting examples of the "storage medium" of claims 25, 29 and 44. Moreover, the claimed storage medium is not in any way whatsoever limited to a local hard disk as suggested in the office action.

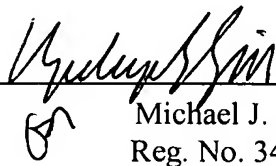
Claims 14 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 112, second paragraph, because "no function is specified by the word(s) preceding 'means'". This rejection must be withdrawn inasmuch as there is no requirement that the word or words preceding "means" specify a function. The various functions associated with the claims "means" are clearly set forth (e.g., in claim 14, "storing records", "generating messages" and "communicating the messages") and the scope of these claims is ascertainable from these functions.

Claims 1, 5-11, 13-15, 19-26 and 28-45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(b) as allegedly being 'anticipated' by Miller et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,615,214). Claims 2-4, 12, 16-18 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as allegedly being "obvious" over Miller et al. in view of Reed et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,044,205). The subject patent application has an effective filing date of April 28, 1997, which is before any possible date to which Miller et al. is entitled. Consequently, Miller et al. is not prior art to the subject patent application and the rejections based on Miller et al. are improper and must be withdrawn. Applicants do not in any way acquiesce in the characterizations of Miller et al. or Reed et al. in the office action, or in the manner in which these documents are allegedly read onto the pending claims.

The pending claims are believed to be allowable and favorable office action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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